Salton Sea Ecosystem Restoration Study Habitat Update

> Advisory Committee July 15, 2005 San Diego, CA

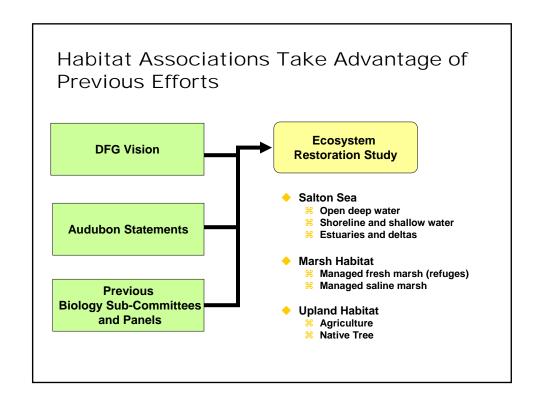
## Agenda

- Background and review of current activities
- Summary of first Habitat Working Group meeting
- ♦ Next steps

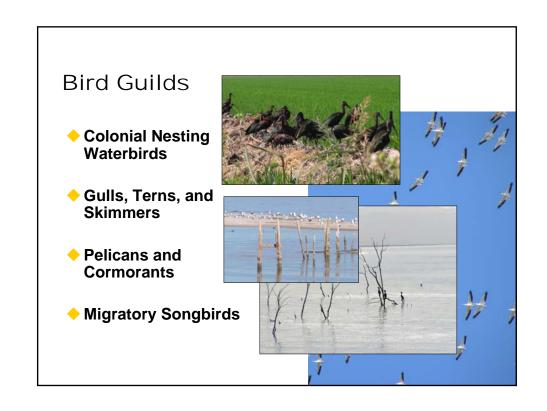
#### **Habitat Goals**

Recent Legislation

"Restoration of long-term stable aquatic and shoreline habitat for the historic levels and density of fish and wildlife that depend on the Salton Sea."





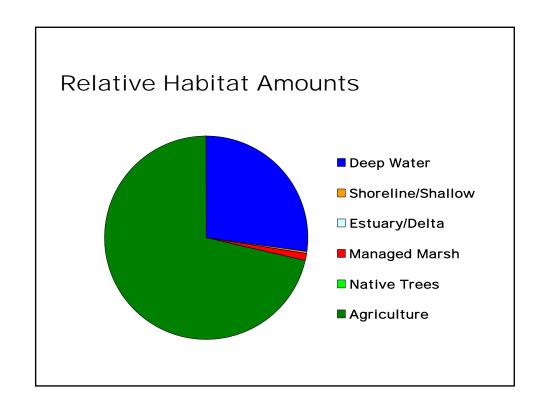


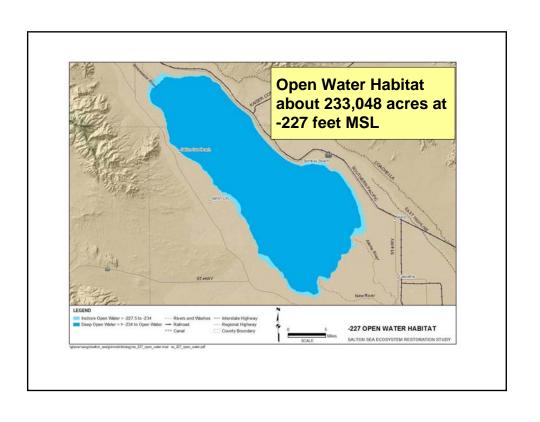
## Habitats/Bird Guilds

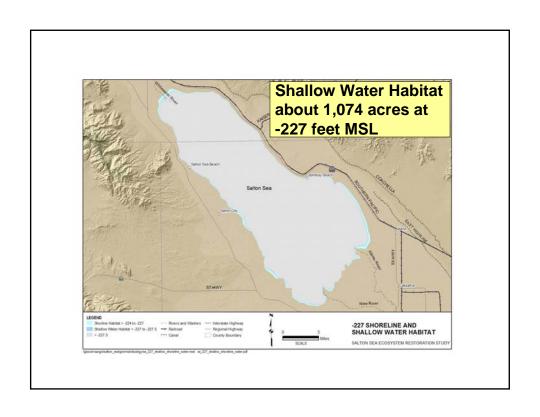
Habitat Type	Long-legged Waders	Shorebirds	Marsh Birds	Waterfowl	Gulls, Terns and Skimmers	Pelicans and Cormorants	Colonial Nesting Waterbirds	Migrant Songbirds
Open Water (deep)				•	•	•	•	
Open Water (inshore)	•			•	•	•	•	
Shoreline and Shallow Water	•	•		•	•		•	•
Estuaries (deltas and drains)	•	•	•	•	•			
Managed Marshes (created shallow water habitats)	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Native Tree Habitat								•
Agricultural Land	•	•		•	•			•

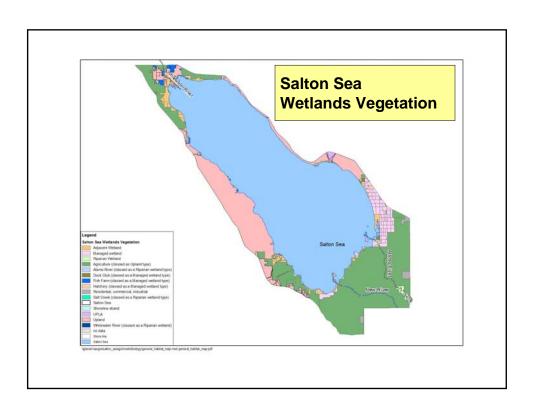
#### Additional Habitat Considerations

- Specific habitat concerns for fish and other wildlife
- Sensitive species needs (e.g., Yuma clapper rail and desert pupfish)
- ◆Significant populations (e.g., eared grebes)
- Habitat features (e.g., lake, open water, snags, islands)
- Habitat quality (water quality, water temperature, organic material)









### Ongoing Habitat Evaluations

- Evaluation of bird habitat and criteria
  - # Define and quantify existing habitat
  - **K** Identify habitat-species relationships and dependent species
  - **#Document and support restoration criteria**
  - **#Review objectives of avian conservation groups**
- Evaluation of the salinity tolerance of selected Salton Sea aquatic species
  - # Identify fish species for potential future introduction
  - **#Review salinity tolerance information**
  - **# Confirm availability of Salton Sea marine species** for future introduction
- Bird habitat modeling (PRBO)
  - # Preliminary habitat evaluation tool
  - #Future adaptive management tool

# Integrated Efforts to Support Habitat Evaluations

- Selenium assessment
  - **#Biota studies**
  - **#Bench-scale testing**
- Nutrient loading in the Salton Sea
  - **∺Phosphorus re-suspension studies (UCD)**
- Other programs
  - **Salton Sea Authority, Torres-Martinez,**New River Wetlands, and CEP

### Update on Habitat Working Group

- ◆First Meeting: June 29 in Ontario
- **♦Input** 
  - **#Greater clarification of habitat goals and conservation objectives**
  - **#Quantification of existing habitats**
  - **∺Confirmation of the species/habitat**relationships
  - **#Improved information sharing capability**
  - **#Greater emphasis on wildlife and habitat at Advisory Committee meetings**

# Habitat Working Group Additional Considerations

- Disturbance issues
  - **\*\*Considerations for isolating specific habitats** from development and human activity
- Restoration Staging
  - **\*What are impacts associated with restoration/construction staging?**
  - **#How habitats could be protected during restoration and transition to restored condition?**
  - **#How can impacts be minimized?**
- Proximity to Salton Sea
  - **#Importance of Salton Sea to adjacent habitats**

### Next Habitat Working Group Meeting

- August 9 in Ontario
- Present and clarify habitat and conservation goals and objectives
- Present available information on existing habitats
- Present restoration approach
  - **#Identify key wildlife and habitat decisions**
  - **∺Identify areas of uncertainty**
  - **#Identify physical limitations of the system**
- Review preliminary restoration alternatives
  - **\*\*Discuss disturbance avoidance measures** and staging impacts

### Habitat Working Group: Additional Considerations

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